



Truman VA BULLETIN

Employee Recognition Awards:

Employee of the Month (May): **Bobby Howald** (FM)

Good Catch Patient Safety Award: **Michelle Ornburn** (Pharmacy), **Carrie L. Lawrence** (PS) and **Robert C. Cunneen, II** (PS)

Star of the Month (Mar.): **Matthew Novak, PhD** (BH)

Star of the Month (Apr.): **Marsha Robuck** (SC)

Torch Award: **Robert Overstreet** (PS)

Department of Veterans Affairs—Columbia, Missouri

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MAY IS HEPATITIS AWARENESS MONTH

May is Hepatitis Awareness Month. Typically, 2,000 to 4,000 liver transplants are performed each year in the United States (far less than the number of people on the waiting list for available organs). Transplantation can be a life saving treatment. However, in nearly all cases, the patient's new liver is infected eventually by Hepatitis C virus, because the virus remains in the patient's bloodstream during surgery. The powerful antiviral drugs now used to attack Hepatitis C virus prior to end-stage liver failure are not used routinely during surgery due to the patient's weakened condition and

because of the strong medication used to avoid rejection of the new liver. After re-infection with Hepatitis C, nearly 40 percent of patients suffer rapid liver failure. To close that clinical gap, a new antibody has been developed and is designed to be a therapy shortly before and after transplant surgery. Details of this new research were presented last month at the 44th Annual Meeting of the European Association for the Study of the Liver in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Relatively recent research indicated that 5.4 percent of Vet-

erans receiving health care from VA were likely to be infected with Hepatitis C, which is higher than the overall U.S. population. The highest rates of Hepatitis C were found among Veterans that had used injection drugs, served in the Vietnam era, had ever been in jail or had tattoos. For more information about this new research or Hepatitis, contact **Suzanne Opperman, RN**, Hepatology Advanced Practice Nurse and Transplant Coordinator at Truman VA. She can be reached at extension 56334 or pager 5530.

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CONGRATULATIONS!

★ **Paula Williams, RN**, Minority Veterans Program Coordinator, was recognized on May 2 for her role as co-founder and chairperson of the Boone County Minority Health Network. The minority health organization received the Mayor of Columbia Health and Fitness Award for its efforts to eliminate health disparities and improve health literacy by offering free educational workshops, exercise programs and health screenings.

★ **Veronica Ramnarine, LCSW**, Chief, Social Work, has been appointed Chair of Truman VA's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Committee.

DOUGLASS HIGH SCHOOL HEALTH FAIR



On April 30, Truman VA staff members participated in the Frederick Douglass High School Health Fair. Representatives from Truman VA included **Kathy Crews, Jeff Kimbro, Robert Rucker, Carla Vroman, Maya Warren** and **Paula Williams**. The VA team led an educational discussion on the following topics: suicide prevention, alcohol and drug abuse issues, Federal employment, career opportunities, health-related

job fields and teen physical and mental health. Feedback was very positive and this group plans more involvement with Truman VA's Partner in Education.

OI&T CORNER – LEASED PC DEPLOYMENT

The final shipment of leased Dell Personal Computers (PC) has been received by the Office of Information and Technology (OI&T). This shipment will allow OI&T to replace the remaining non-leased equipment. Deployments began on May 12. **Joe Brouhard**, a hearing impaired Dell contractor, will be physically installing the PCs. Joe has worked with us before and is a very capable technician. He does not sign, but he reads lips and can address any questions you might have. OI&T personnel will be working closely with him to ensure your data is migrated seamlessly and on your schedule. If you have a CMO number starting with an "8" or lower, your PC will be replaced as part of this effort. OI&T expects to complete the deployment within six weeks. Prior to your PC being replaced, you will be contacted by OI&T to coordinate the details of your

replacement. A leased 19" flat panel monitor, keyboard and mouse are part of the upgrade. Your assistance is needed with clearing the desk of personal and work items and removing any stickers on the monitor that you wish to keep. All CPUs must be placed on the desktop. If you have any questions, please contact the OI&T Help Desk at extension 56500.

GREEN UP YOUR E-MAIL !

One of our staff members recently suggested use of a "Think Green!" message at the bottom of e-mail messages. If you are interested, the message below can be added to your personal signature in Outlook.



Think Green!

Before printing this e-mail ask the question, *is it necessary?*

MAY SERVICE PIN RECIPIENTS

35-Years

Steven Sherman,
Medical Technologist (CS)

25-Years

Stephen M. DePriest, RN,
Staff Nurse (PS)
Sheila C. Plaster,
Program Support Clerk (PS)

20-Years

Richard L. Hannegan, LPN
(PS)
Kristi S. Murphy, RN,
Staff Nurse (PS)
Julie A. Steakley,
Human Resources Specialist (HR)

15-Years

Ann G. Beck,
Supervisory Accountant (FIN)
Winifred L. Chirnside,
Program Specialist (COS)
Susan L. Deutscher, PhD,
Research Health Scientist (Research)
Marie TK Dickerson,
Biological Science Laboratory
Technician (Research)
Marilyn F. Herndon, RN,
Clinical Reviewer (PI)
David L. Mills,
Housekeeping Aid Supervisor (FM)

10-Years

Harold B. Cline,
Medical Records Technician (HAS)
Peter J. Eberhardt, RN,
Staff Nurse (PC)

Brenda W. Johnson,
Medical Support Assistant (PS)
Maureen G. Miller,
Medical Data Clerk (HAS)
Judy D. Pope,
Nursing Assistant (PS)

5-Years

Cheryl J. Alexander,
Medical Technician (CS)
George R. Bunyea, Jr.,
AC Equipment Mechanic (FM)
Melissa S. Fullerton,
Food Service Worker (Canteen)
Richelle A. Kluck,
Audiologist (SC)
Kara R. Kurtenbach,
Health Technician (PS)
George M. Milliner,
Maintenance Worker (FM)

EXCELLENCE IN NURSING AWARDS

On May 6, as part of National Nurses Week, the following Truman VA nurses were recognized as local recipients of the annual Excellence in Nursing Awards:



Nursing Assistant Category: **Barbara Wheelock**, Health Care Technician



Licensed Practical Nurse: **Jason Essig, LPN**



Registered Nurse in a Staff Role: **Paula Williams, RN**



Registered Nurse in a non-Staff Role: **LaDonna Crum, RN**



Department of Veterans Affairs—Columbia, Missouri

Harry S. Truman Memorial
Veterans' Hospital
800 Hospital Drive
Columbia, Missouri 65201

Phone: 573-814-6000

Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans' Hospital

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WELCOME

Susan Connell,
Physical Therapy Assistant
(CS)

John Cunningham,
Patient Services Assistant
(HAS)

Tiffany Sanford-Martens, PhD,
Staff Psychologist (BH)

Jennifer Sellers,
Physical Therapy Assistant
(CS)

Joshua Tilley,
AC Equipment Operator
(FM)



Pictured: John Cunningham; Tiffany Sanford-Martens, PhD; Dawn Tomasini; and Joshua Tilley

FAREWELL

Marcia Beazley,
Student Nurse Trainee (PS)

Phyllis Brandt, RN,
Staff Nurse (PS)

Jessica Bowne,
Student Nurse Trainee (PS)

Stacy Jefferson, RN,
Staff Nurse (PS)

Regan Hayden,
Student Nurse Trainee (PS)

Christine Wagner,
Student Nurse Trainee (PS)

Lisa Williams,
Student Nurse Trainee (PS)

Odds and Ends

National VHA Leadership

Effective May 9, Gerald M. Cross, MD, Deputy Under Secretary for Health, will serve as Executive in Charge of the Veterans Health Administration. In that capacity, Dr. Cross will provide leadership, supervision and management of all VHA operations and personnel. This action was announced by Eric K. Shinseki, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, as a result of Dr. Michael Kussman's retirement as Under Secretary for Health.

Thank You

My family and I are so grateful for all the comforting words, cards, memorial contributions and donated time given to us during the recent passing of my husband. Without your prayers and thoughtful acts of kindness, our coping would have been much more difficult. We are overwhelmed by the outpouring of concern from all of you for a new employee and her family. This exemplifies what a caring group of people work here taking care of Veterans on a daily basis. From the bottom

of our hearts, thank you and God bless all that helped out in any way!

Brenda McCoy and Family

ENJOY YOUR FREEDOM? THANK A VETERAN!